

Civic Center Plaza Entrance
630 N. Broadway
P.O. Box 149
Santa Ana, CA 92702-0149



ESTABLISHED 1889

Telephone: (714) 834-2727
FAX: (714) 558-0681
www.ocgov.com/assessor

OFFICE OF THE ASSESSOR

REAL ESTATE FRAUD ALERT

Real estate fraud is a form of theft criminals may use to steal your home, real estate holdings or the equity in your property. Real estate fraud is on the rise throughout the county and can take many forms. Your best protection against fraud is to be aware of the warning signs, and report any suspicious activity or transactions against your property.

COMMON REAL PROPERTY FRAUDS:

Home Equity/Identity Fraud - A forged deed is recorded to give the appearance that the perpetrator has acquired ownership of a property. The perpetrator uses the equity in the property as collateral to borrow money. No payments are made on the new loan(s), and the true owner could face foreclosure.

Home Renovation/Mortgage Fraud - Contractors offer to do home improvement work or lenders offer special "low-interest" financing, but do not deliver what was promised. Homeowners are left with partially complete or substandard construction, or a mortgage payment that is higher than expected.

Real Estate Investment/Foreclosure Fraud - Investors are lured into buying property that is supposedly facing foreclosure for pennies on the dollar. Quitclaim deeds and other documents are forged to give the appearance that a property is being sold to avoid foreclosure.

COMMON WARNING SIGNS:

Missing Property Value Notice Or Tax Bill - A missing property value notice or property tax bill can be the first signs of a Home Equity Fraud. The Assessor mails property value notices in **July**, and the Tax Collector mails the bills in **September**. Call the Assessor at (714) 834-2727 if you do not receive a notice, or the Tax Collector at (714) 834-3411 if you do not receive a tax bill.

You Are Notified That A Property Document Has Been Recorded - The County Clerk-Recorder sends notification to property owners when a document is filed against their property. If you did not initiate the document filing, contact your local police department or the O. C. Sheriff at (714) 647-7040.

Loan Papers Or Payment Booklets - If you receive documents for a loan you did not applied for, notify the lender immediately.

An "Investment" That Sounds Too Good To Be True - Use good judgment and do your research.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:

- Orange County District Attorney, Economic Crimes Unit - (714) 834-3600
- State of California, Department of Real Estate - (213) 620-2072
- Orange County Consumer Fraud Hotline - (714) 648-3600

PROGRAMS THAT MAY SAVE YOU MONEY

A HOMEOWNERS' EXEMPTION MAY SAVE YOU MORE THAN \$70 EVERY YEAR:

If you owned and occupied this property as your principal residence on 12:01 a.m. January 1, 2006 you may be eligible for a Homeowners' Exemption that could reduce your property taxes by more than \$70 every year. If you already have a Homeowners' Exemption, the enclosed value notice will list the exemption, and a \$7,000 value reduction will be included in the Net Assessed Value.

If you meet the eligibility requirements but do not have this exemption, please call our office at (714) 834-3821 between 8:00 a.m. to 4:45 p.m., Monday through Friday for personal assistance.

No filing fee is required.

PROGRAMS THAT MAY SIGNIFICANTLY REDUCE YOUR PROPERTY TAXES:

Take Your Proposition 13 Value With You To A Replacement Property

- Homeowners age 55+ buying replacement home in the same county (Prop. 60)
- Homeowners age 55+ buying replacement home in a different county (Prop. 90)
- Severely and permanently disabled homeowners (Prop. 110)
- Contaminated property (Prop. 1)
- Property taken by government action (Sect. 68)

Transfer Your Property And Proposition 13 Value To Your Child Or Grandchild

- Transfer of property between parent and child (Prop. 58)
- Transfer from grandparent to grandchild (Prop. 193)

Temporary Value Reductions

- Economic adjustment due to decline in market value (Prop. 8)
- Substantially damaged/destroyed by a declared disaster (Prop. 50)
- Calamities with \$10,000 or more in property damage (Prop. 170)

No filing fee is required for any of these programs.

Please visit the Orange County Assessor's website at www.ocgov.com/assessor or call our office at (714) 834-2727 for more information